

On motion of Mr. Claude,
Ordered to lie on the table.

Whereas the United States of America, by her convention with France, concluded on the 30th day of September, in the year 1800, pursuing a course of wise and urgent policy, which had the effect of maintaining the peace, and eminently promoting the prosperity of our country, stipulated for a discharge from the onerous articles in the treaty with France of the year seventeen hundred and seventy eight, by which the United States became bound to guarantee to the crown of France her possessions in America; and also by that convention was released from all claims on part of France or her subjects against the United States; but whereas the United States accomplished her exoneration from these momentous liabilities by surrendering all pretensions for indemnification claimable for American citizens on account of illegal captures, seizures, and confiscations by France before the 30th of September 1800, by which renunciation those sufferers were not only forever debarred the mediation of their own government but lost all claim in every form against France for the wrongs inflicted upon them by that government; and whereas although it was the privilege of the United States thus to avail herself of the means which the grievances of her citizens afforded to relieve the union from a corresponding liability for indemnification, but above all from the treaty obligation referred to which if continued would have entangled this country in all the wars to which France was a party; yet it became the consequent duty of the United States to assume the satisfaction of those claims of her citizens which she used as the rich consideration to France for an inestimable benefit conferred upon this country; and whereas any other view would be repugnant to the sacred duty of protection which bound the United States and under which she undertook to mediate those demands of her citizens and to enforce their redress, and would imply a right in the government of the union to avail itself of the misfortunes of a portion of her citizens to accomplish a national good at the sacrifice of individual interests entitled to her care and confided to her as their necessary and only guardian; and whereas citizens of Maryland sufferers to a large extent have asked this indemnification from the Congress of the United States as a debt thus devolved upon the United States; and from various quarters of the union the same ap-